



Advocates for Ohio's Future

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ADVOCATES FOR OHIO'S FUTURE PRAISE DECISION TO REPEAL DRUG TESTING PROVISION

COLUMBUS – Advocates for Ohio's Future applauded the Senate Finance Committee, President Niehaus and Minority Leader Kearny for removing a discriminatory provision to start a drug-testing program for Ohioans applying for Ohio Works First. The item was part of the Mid-Biennium Budget Review bill, which the full Senate is voting on this afternoon.

The amendment would have implemented a three county two year pilot drug testing program for applicants of Ohio Works First. Under the pilot program, the county department of job and family services of each participating county would assess each adult member of an assistance group that applies to participate in Ohio Works First to determine whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that any of the adults have a chemical dependency.

Gayle Channing Tenenbaum, Co-Chair of Advocates for Ohio's Future, praised the Senate Finance Committee for taking out the amendment. Channing Tenenbaum stated, "We are grateful that Chairman Widener and Ranking Member Sawyer and the members of the Finance Committee recognized the harmfulness of this provision and removed it from the bill." Channing Tenenbaum continued, "This measure would have impacted Ohio's children, who make up more than 75% of the Ohio Works First caseload. We commend the Senate for understanding these concerns and acting accordingly."

Co-chair Mark Davis praised Governor Kasich and his administration for their work on this issue and related issues. Davis said, "We continue to be impressed with Governor Kasich's leadership in the past on this issue, and his recent commitment to add \$3 million into addiction treatment." He continued, "The Governor has worked to protect Ohio's most vulnerable in his actions on welfare overpayments, foodstamp overpayments and his support for getting Ohioans back to work."

Advocates for Ohio's Future will continue to work to prevent such discriminatory measure from being enacted in Ohio.

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Advocates for Ohio's Future is a statewide coalition of 280 local and statewide organizations that works to maintain vital public services – health, human services, and early care & education – at a level that meets people's basic needs and protects our state's most vulnerable populations.